

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending in the application. Claims 1, 10, and 17 are the only independent claims.

Claims 1-20 stand subject to a Restriction Requirement according to which the Examiner has divided the claims into two groups, namely, Group I including claims 1-9 and 17-20 directed to an endoscopic retractor and Group II containing claims 10-16 drawn to a medical method.

In response to the Restriction Requirement, applicant hereby provisionally elects the claims of Group I, i.e., claims 1-9 and 17-20, for continued prosecution in the application. Pursuant to this election, claims 10-16 are indicated above as being withdrawn.

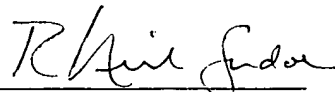
The Examiner has also required an election of species from among Species 1 (Figures 1 and 2), Species 2 (Figures 3 and 4) and Species 3 (Figure 5).

In response to this Election Requirement, applicant elects herein Species 1 (Figures 1 and 2) for continued prosecution in the application. All of the claims of Group I, except possibly claim 18, are believed to read on the elected species.

Should the Examiner believe that direct contact with applicant's attorney would advance the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number below.

Respectfully submitted,

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